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THE MCGILL DAILY

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The silly,
sinister world
of Marcel Dzama

see pg. 8



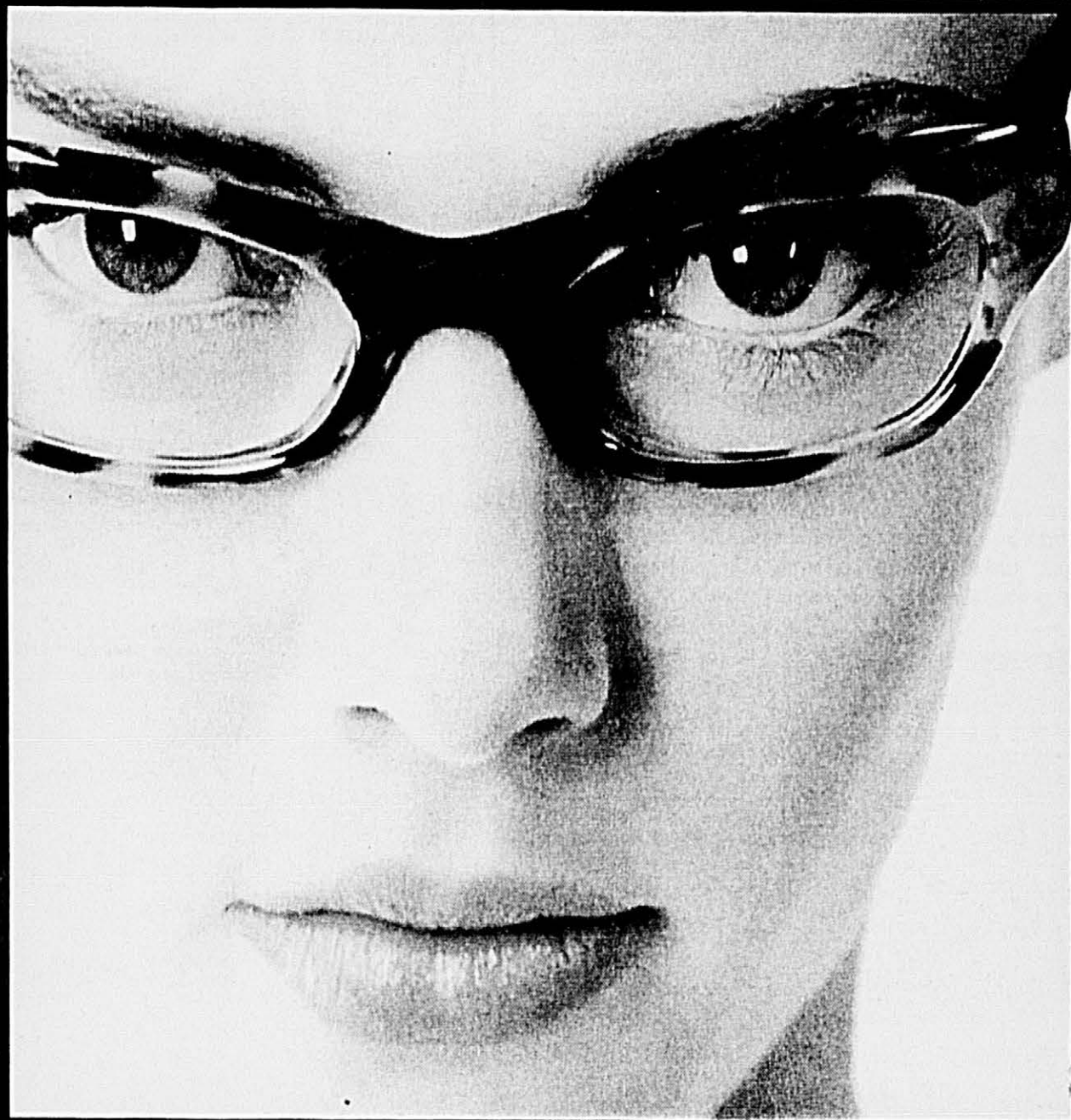
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Coke Debate Fizzing Again

Cola exclusivity back on University's priority list

BY JON BRICKER
The McGill Daily

As brand new Coca-Cola machines pop up across campus, student leaders are beginning to wonder if the university is again courting a beverage deal like the one students overwhelmingly rejected last winter.

The Brown Student Services building, Redpath Library, and Bronfman Management building all got new Coke machines Friday, a move that suggests McGill is up to something "sneaky" according to one student leader.

McGill officials reported Friday that the new machines are part of an old agreement and do not mean that Coke is being given an exclusivity deal, but several student leaders said that they've received every indication that McGill is once again wooing the cola giant.

"I find the new machines a little suspicious," said Engineering Undergraduate Society President Anjali Mishra. "It seems to me that they're trying hard right now to sell off the entire campus."

She pointed to recent negotiations between McGill and faculty associations, in which the university has tried to take over management of campus cafeterias and beverage sales.

"McGill is clearly being as pushy as they can be," Mishra said.

"They're trying to sneak [the campuswide exclusivity deal] into an agreement with us," agreed Music Undergraduate Students' Association President Leonie Wall.

Wall said that when MUSA officials were reluctant to ink a deal that asked the association to submit to any university-signed cold beverage agreement, an administrator offered the association a \$500 bonus for signing on quickly.

"The fact that they mentioned a bonus immediately put me on guard," Wall said. "It was like they were trying to rush me into something.... Even though the student population made it clear last year that they're opposed to a cold beverage agreement, the university still seems to really

want it."

But McGill's Ancillary Services Director, Alan Charade, who was responsible for last year's negotiations with Coke, said the machines installed last week are not cause for worry. He explained that the Brown Building machines were put in place at the request of the Dean of Students who was concerned that there were no machines available yet in the new building.

"Those should have been put in months ago," he said. "We are still trying to put together a non-exclusive deal for cold beverages on campus. In the interim, we need machines around to accommodate students."

Charade said that even though talks with Coke are again going on, the emphasis this time is on a deal that addresses the concerns students raised last winter.

He said McGill is pursuing a "reasonable offering of competitive products" on campus, an arrangement that would keep prices down, give students choice, and prevent a cola supplier from tattooing its name all over campus.

Charade also said that while cola heavyweights like Pepsi and Coke insist on secrecy when it comes to these deals, a small handful of student players would likely be allowed to see any proposed contract this time around.

He did admit, however, that this sort of arrangement would likely mean less money for McGill than the exclusivity contract that was discussed last year.

"Non-exclusivity would certainly dilute the net benefit of a cold beverage agreement," Charade said.

But Mishra says a recent move by the university to assume control over cafeterias in the Redpath Library and Bronfman building previously operated by SSMU and the Management Undergraduate Society respectively, is aimed at usurping the power of associations that have long been able to select their own cold beverage suppliers.

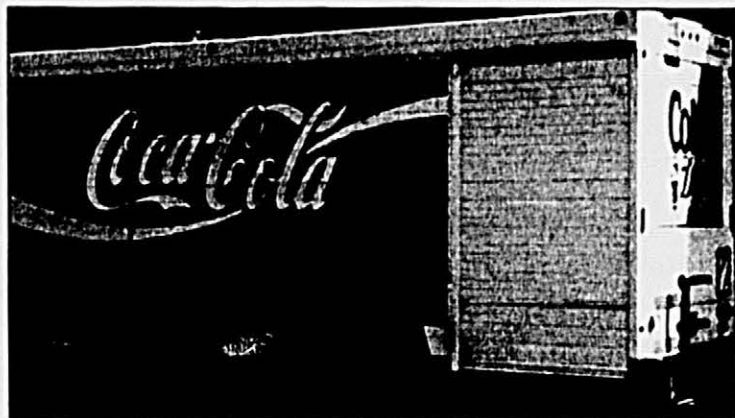
"Eventually, this strategy gives them an opportunity to sell off the entire campus," Mishra said. "To the university, it's just a quick buck."

SSMU VP Operations Kevin McPhee agrees. "There's a lot of money to be made in cold beverage agreements.... Now, we have the university running that. The students' society was not consulted at all."

Last semester's debate came to a head in March. Students turned out in record numbers to vote on a referendum question which asked them whether SSMU should support an exclusive agreement between McGill and Coke. In the end, nearly 56.4 per cent of students who turned out voted against the deal. Although the deal was not binding on the university, McGill officials decided weeks later to put the deal on the backburner following public pressure and national media attention.

Last week, Mishra said that if administrators are again seeking a cola deal, she hopes that they will take a few lessons from students' response to the secrecy that surrounded negotiations last winter.

"The university should keep in mind that students want and need to have a say in terms of quality, quantity, and pricing," she said. "Hopefully, this time, the university will engage in public consultation."



Coke trucks unload the new machines last Friday

Coke Prices Go Up at U of A

BY JON DUNBAR
The Gateway, Edmonton

Students and administration were surprised earlier this week to see the prices rise on campus Coke machines.

Prices for 500mL bottles inflated from \$1.50 to \$1.75 in vending machines in the Van Vliet Center.

"We were contacted by the university to see if we were prepared to agree with this; we said no," said Greg Harlow, VP (Operations and Finance) at the Students' Union. "Obviously, somebody crossed the line somewhere."

The Coke deal voted in by referendum two years ago stipulates that only a limited

number of people may read it, including General Manager Bill Smith and the SU VP (Operations and Finance).

According to Harlow, under the terms of the deal between Coca Cola, the University, and the Students' Union, in order to increase soft drink prices before three years have passed, all three parties must be in agreement.

"For fairly obvious reasons, this party ain't agreeing," said Harlow.

The three-year agreement with Coca Cola is dated to expire at the end of this academic school year, at which point the company will legally be able to raise prices.

"I guess things will be back on the table at that point," said Harlow.

"We certainly haven't had any other

problems with the deal," Harlow remarked.

"The increase in revenue to the University is not really worth the increase in price that the students would have to pay," said Harlow. "I suspect students would be POed if I raised the prices. Those are the political realities."

Earlier this year, Coca Cola received heavy criticism after considering installing heat sensors in their vending machines. The sensors would have measured environmental temperature and varied the price according to perceived demand.

The Office of the University VP (Finance & Administration) was unavailable for comment regarding the price increase.

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Golden Key Opens Door to Controversy

Students accuse scholarship society of having slippery ethics

BY IAN MCKELLAR
News Reporter

The Golden Key National Honour Society, an exclusive scholarship organization, is presently at McGill trying to sign up new recruits for a hefty charge, and this has led some upset students to question the operation's legitimacy.

In early September, select students received letters printed on McGill stationery, informing them of their eligibility for membership in the Society.

According to the letter, this membership is extended "by invitation only" to the top 15 percent of students at the university. While the benefits are many - including "prestige, enhanced 'networking' abilities, and the chance at one of three annual \$700 scholarships" - they come at a price. Golden Key only begins to consider an applying student's credentials after an \$80 membership fee has been forked over.

It is this point which galls Todd Ferguson, a U1 Master's Sociology student. "How much of this money goes to ben-

efit the students directly?" he asked. "If, last year, 200 people joined, at \$80 a pop, that leaves almost \$14,000, but where does it go?"

In 1997, the Society spent \$1,822,837 on employee salaries and its executive director pulled in \$247,600. The salaries paid out amounted to more than three times what was distributed in scholarships.

According to McGill Golden Key President Benoit Lord, part of the money collected from students goes towards "networking". The Society has contacts throughout the private sector, he explains, particularly with Ford, Motorola, and Merck Frosst, and representatives from these companies attend general meetings in search of new recruits.

"Let's say these companies are looking for people in the top 15 percent," said Lord. "If members want career opportunities, it gives them a chance to hook up contacts for networking."

Still, some students wonder about the ethics involved in the dispensing of the annual scholarships - specifically, the con-

flict inherent in paying \$80 for a chance to win \$700.

Lord, however, insists that the fee is a legitimate one.

"It's not like a lottery ticket," he said. "It's voluntary to join, and the decisions to award the scholarships are based on merit; the selection is made by a committee."

But Ferguson maintains that the University should have no part in helping the private Golden Key Society find recruits. He points out that it is quite rare to

find it particularly disingenuous. To me, it amounts to pimping."

Dean of Students Jukier says that provincial regulations are the impetus for McGill's involvement in the Society, which she admits is an "independent organization, completely separate from McGill."

Quebec prevents the school from divulging any academic information

[thereafter] deal directly with the Society."

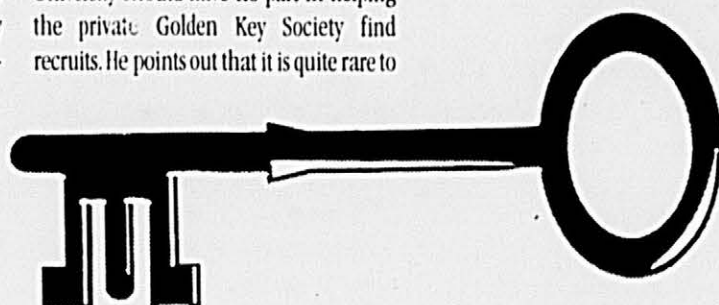
Conceding that McGill has few forms of recognition for top mark-earners, Jukier adds that Golden Key is "one more way that students can be recognized at McGill for high academic achievement."

While Jukier argues that having herself and Gellar act as co-advisors helps to dissuade Golden Key from "forays into areas that we don't approve of," Ferguson cites the glamorous conventions staged annually as signs of Golden Key's skewed priorities.

The Society's publication Key Notes lauds the 2000 Golden Key International Convention taking place at the Century Plaza Hotel in Beverly Hills, "known worldwide for its luxury and style...the retreat of many movie stars, presidents, and royalty."

The lavish Beverly Hills gathering, the "sweet deal" for employees and the thousands of dollars in membership money that goes unaccounted for is altogether too much for Ferguson.

"The whole thing seems very fishy to me," he said.



receive letters from Principal Bernard Shapiro, Dean of Students Rosalie Jukier and Registrar Robin Gellar linking McGill to such a dubious organization.

"I get junk mail all the time," he says, "but when it's signed by the Principal and sent to students in dire financial straits, I

about its students to outside sources and so the university administration must intervene on Golden Key's behalf.

"We send out the information about Golden Key to the students, but allow them to make their own decision," she said. "They are under no obligation to join, and

A Not So Warm Welcome for Refugees in Canada

Refugees face a hypocritical system, according to policy experts

BY ALLISON BRUNETTE
News Reporter

For a country that prides itself on a so-called cultural mosaic and an open-arms immigration policy, Canada's attitude towards refugees shows "pure hypocrisy," according to Julius Grey.

Grey, a well-known Montreal lawyer and member of McGill's law faculty, delivered his message Wednesday during an event hosted by the McGill Institute for the Study of Canada. Grey was joined by Glynis Williams of Action Refugees Montreal.

The two took the opportunity to highlight their concerns with what they called Canada's "elite" refugee program.

"I love my country, and I feel we have done a number of positive things for the refugee situation," said Williams, "but by the same token, what is the gold standard? Can we do better?"

According to Williams, there are about 14-million refugees in the world, and roughly the same number of 'displaced persons.' What many people do not realize, according to Williams is that women and children make up eighty percent of those figures.

"The key word is protection, which must be offered to people in refugee-like conditions, who do not meet the refugee status of the Geneva Convention." As the face of international politics changes, he explained, the sovereign state is becoming increasingly popular. This is creating a new situation of "statelessness" for certain individuals and ethnic groups - a situation that the Geneva Convention wasn't designed to address.

But he also said Canada's Minister of Immigration Eleanor Caplan has assumed an attitude that has made the problem

worse. He quoted her as having once said, "we want to open the front door to refugees, and close the back door." In other words, according to Williams, Caplan's idea is that Canada should select refugees instead of letting refugees select Canada.

Williams also showed concern with how few good lawyers take on pro bono immigration cases. As a result, he said, refugees are only granted one claim. Women who face domestic violence have it particularly rough, he said, because they are often unaware that they can separate their claims from those of their husbands.

These problems are all compounded, Williams said, by the emphasis Canada's system places on refugees' education and work experience.

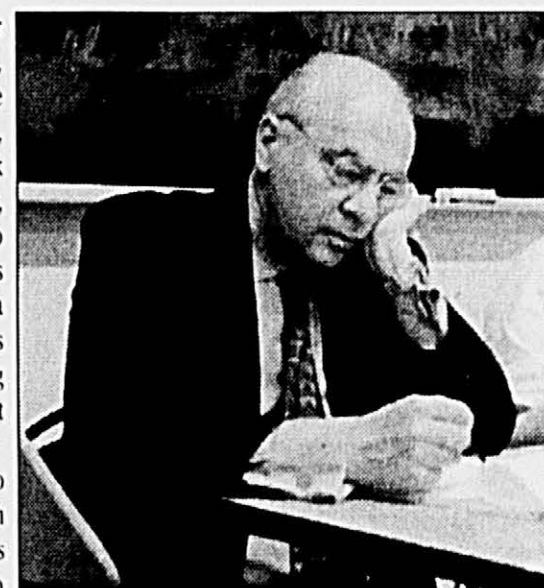
He also said that unexpected refugees who wind up in detainment often have their basic human rights violated.

"Taking away people's freedom is a drastic thing, and sometimes the case is simply that they are not able to give an explanation upon arrival."

Williams wants to see changes for people in detainment, as well as encouragement to accept more refugees in Canada.

"People need to retain humanitarian qualities and not stereotype."

Professor Grey also highlighted human rights concerns with the current system.



Montreal lawyer Julius Grey deep in thought

"We hide behind the fact that the UN ranks us number one," he said. "The system is hypocritical because we make it certain no one can ever come here, and those who do are permanently discouraged. The orthodox view is that we need immigrants, but it is ridiculous to select refugees the same way we choose immigrants."

Grey sees hypocrisy in Canada's general unwillingness to accept refugees who are part of a large exodus or whose acceptance may not be politically popular with all Canadians.

"We have been absolutely impossible with the Israeli situation," he said. "There was a systematic attempt not to have people recognized as refugees even though the torture was documented."

He added, "political correctness permeates the system which makes us react differently to certain refugees, the essence of refugee law is that nobody said refugees had to be perfect; it is a crime against humanity to exclude someone on the basis of they may have committed crimes."



Kyla Dushko

Cyclists Out to Honour World Car-Free Day

BY ALANAH HEFFEZ
News Reporter

Over fifty cyclists took to downtown streets last Friday to celebrate world car-free day and to raise awareness about bikers' needs in the city.

The cyclists took off from Phillip's square at 5:30 pm, and filled up both lanes of St. Catherine street. They also claimed such busy streets as Sherbrooke, De Maisonneuve, St. Laurent and McGill College, causing the rush-hour automobile traffic extra delay.

Frustrated drivers honked as the cyclists waited out 2 consecutive green lights while slower group members caught up. Some riders bore signs that read slogans like "We need space too."

"We're not trying to piss people off, we're trying to make a statement," said Becky Lipton, a McGill School of Environment student who was instrumental in spreading the word about Friday's event.

She called the demonstration an "organized coincidence," and empha-

sized that the event is not tied to any organization. "It just happens," she said.

"The idea is that if you get a critical mass of bikers, then cars can't run you over," said Netami Stuart. She claimed that she has been in several accidents with cars during her bicycling career.

But not only did the event promote safety for cyclists, participants also said Friday that they wanted to promote biking as a cost and energy efficient mode of transportation.

"People want to reduce pollution and reduce traffic," said MSE student Ravi Handa. Bicycles, he said, are one solution.

"For a lot of people, it's their only means of transport. Let's accommodate people who are doing something good for society."

He says he would like to see more bike paths, better efforts by the city to clear existing paths in winter, more places to lock bikes.

Friday's event to honour car-free day takes after a similar one in San Francisco. The American city first hosted the event in 1992 where similar demonstrations have become a monthly event that normally boasts well over 500 cyclists.

McGill Forges Link With Media Mogul

Universitas 21 partners up with Newscorp to offer pro-profit on-line courses.

By JAIME KIRZNER-ROBERTS
The McGill Daily

Private, for-profit education sold by Rupert Murdoch's Newscorp may carry McGill's name as early as next year. But student and faculty leaders say that this deal paves the way to an increasingly-corporatized, inaccessible education.

McGill is one of three Canadian universities to be part of Universitas 21, a consortium of 16 universities which have banded together in order to forge private-sector links, and market their prestigious names worldwide. Newscorp, which owns the Fox Network and major newspapers across the globe, has partnered up with Universitas 21 in a bid to compete for the increasing market for on-line education. While Newscorp will design and deliver the courses, Universitas 21 will accredit the courses and lend its name and the prestige of its member universities.

"I think this is an expression of McGill's openness to the world," said Dawn Conway, Director of the Office of International Research, and Universitas 21 liaison. "I think that U-21 offers McGill an excellent experience - it is very unique, very collegial, multinational, and also entrepreneurial."

There is currently a growing demand for education, according to Conway, and a university with McGill's international reputation stands to make a lot of money by marketing its name. She added, however, that the exact dollar figures have not been disclosed.

"It's certainly not a charitable endeavour," she said.

"We envisage links with the private sector which will bring benefits to us and other partners [of U 21], and which will raise our profile and recognition factor to all the institutions."

But student and faculty leaders do not have such a rosy view of the deal with Newscorp, a corporation worth \$40-billion and no previous experience with education.

"Universities like McGill are moving towards a corporate model, where education becomes a commodity which can be sold," said David Robinson, Director of Public Policy at the Canadian Association of University Teachers. "You can also see that

jurisdiction is being given to private corporations like Murdoch's that don't really have any stake or experience in undertaking the vital role of providing public education."

"Rupert Murdoch has been notorious worldwide for firing journalists who don't agree with his worldview. What does that say about the potential for academic free-

dom under Newscorp?"

Michael Conlon, President of the Canadian Federation of Students, agrees. "The greater the corporate control you have over curriculum, the less you will have discussion over ethical and political issues," said Conlon. "These issues will be overshadowed as soon as they don't fit into the vision of Rupert Murdoch."

"The thought that corporate encroachment could change the discourse on campus is really disturbing," he added.

But Conway denies that courses prepared by Newscorp will be any different than courses offered at McGill or by any other Universitas 21 members.

"The quality of the product has to be consistent with our names," she said. "The names would reflect on our universities' reputations, so it's entirely in McGill's interest to ensure that everything that comes out of U-21 will reflect well on McGill."

Both Conlon and Robinson think that universities like McGill are increasingly made to look for private sources of funding to offset lost public funding.

But Conway says that government cutbacks have little to do with McGill's push to make partnerships with the private sector.

"We've responded to the cutbacks in various ways, and this certainly isn't one of them," she said. Instead, she cites potential benefits like a heightening McGill's profile and an expanding its student exchange program.

"If we want to do business in other countries," she adds, "Universitas 21 gives us partners to work with who will provide us with information about how to do business in that country, what the academic policies are, who the leaders are."

But Conlon doesn't think that universities should be focused on those things. "The purpose of education is not to make money for empire-building university principals like (McGill Principal Bernard) Shapiro," he said. "We need more leaders in our universities, not entrepreneurs."

Robinson believes that after all is said and done, that students will suffer from McGill's links with for-profit on-line education.

"A lot of universities now are looking to cut costs over the long term. Universities are looking to ways to offer more on-line courses as a substitute for classroom education, just because it is cheaper, and not necessarily better," he said. He also thinks that the insurmountable tuition costs in the private sector will prevent low- and middle-income people from having access to education.

"Whereas education was once the great equalizer, education may now serve in accelerating divisions, between different income groups, between people in different countries, and different minority groups."

Universitas 21 will offer courses designed by Newscorp as early as 2001. The consortium was founded in 1997, and has 16 members, including the University of Toronto, the University of Melbourne, and the University of Glasgow.

Universities like McGill are moving towards a corporate model, where education becomes a commodity which can be sold.

McGill Libraries to Receive a \$1.1-Million Infusion

But funds aren't enough to replace cancelled journal subscriptions

PHILIP CLEARY
News Reporter

Campus libraries may finally be on the road to recovery after receiving an extra \$1.1 million from McGill and continued cash infusions from SSMU. Unfortunately, students will still have to contend with journal shortages after years of deep cuts forced cancellations to subscriptions.

"I am very excited, and optimistic, because the university has already put [the additional funding] in the budget, and it has already gone before the board of Governors," said Frances Groen, Director of Libraries.

"Think of it as one big pot, 1.1 million; \$600,000 immediately to pay the bills; and another \$500,000 to buy more books, and to do some staff renewal."

With the increase of the library system's base budget and infrastructure improvements on the way, Groen cautiously looks ahead to a better future. She will soon oversee the opening of an Information Commons - a hall stocked with around 200 computers that will be open for student use around the clock - in the McLennan Basement. She sees the Commons as a token of appreciation for students after three years of SSMU funding.

"It is exciting because it is an initiative that is essentially focusing on the students," said Groen. "It's the students that tend to use facilities in extended hours. It's the students who come to the library for good connectivity and computers, and it's the students who will really benefit from this. And we are particularly pleased because the students of McGill have done so much for the library,

and now it is the opportunity for the libraries to do something for them."

Last year, in response to the administration's chronic under-funding of libraries, SSMU pitched in \$500,000 to support initiatives that would have otherwise gone unfulfilled. \$100,000 was directed towards the construction of a twenty-four hour secure study lounge and the remainder has been invested in books and monographs.

"We shouldn't have to fund libraries to the extent that we do, but we don't accept libraries in a poor state," said Clara Peron, SSMU VP University Affairs. "We cannot always wait for the government."

Journal cutbacks, however, continue to plague the library. In 1999 alone, over 800 journal subscriptions were scrapped, representing a total savings of approximately \$700,000. Of these cancellations, 75 per cent came at the expense of the university's science libraries.

"Last year I had to do a paper for a microbiology class, and I was pretty frustrated when quite a few of the interesting topics were not available because the journals were not here at McGill," said U2 Science student Karan Kelly. "How can you be expected to do the best paper when you don't have access to the best information?"

Groen acknowledged that the library system's journal collection was devastated in the days of cutting and slashing, but



Libraries have seen their funding slashed in recent years

explained that there was little she could do to stop the bleeding.

"The journal price increases are incremental and annual," said Groen. "The average has been no less than 10% for the last five years and in some cases it has been much greater. The university hasn't given us, over those last few years, anything to compensate for the increased costs of our journals."

Over the last ten years the university has been forced to operate with inadequate funds. The number of McGill librarians dropped to 62 from 80 in 1989. The staff was reduced by 44 during the same period of time, while university enrollment continued to accelerate. Although her administration received an annually increased budget from the university in those years, the funds were often targeted beforehand, leaving the library system severely short-staffed.

"I desperately need to get some more staff, especially in technical support," said Groen. "We are operating right now with good people who are overburdened. Up to \$200,000 of the 1.1 million will hopefully be earmarked for something I call staff renewal."

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A Heartfelt Apology to our Beloved Readers

An explanation of how we screwed up royally in the last issue

editorial



The trials and tribulations of producing a paper are usually much longer and complex than most readers think. The week of work that results in one of our three weekly issues is a complicated process to summarize. Once a story is submitted, usually two full days before the actual printed version is on campus, editors must do two edits themselves. These involve basic questions of grammar and go so far as calling sources to check facts in order to cover ourselves for slander and libel and the chance of printing something that may not be harmful, but could just be wrong. This brings us to last Thursday's issue. Before we get too specific, we must first explain Wednesday. Wednesday, named in reference to the planet Mercury by Julius Caesar, was a hard day for everyone. The barometric pressure was low, it was overcast and traffic seemed particularly bad for the middle of the week. We will be the first to admit that we weren't in tip top shape. We got down to business at about 4 pm. It was a pretty typical night. Features editor Zach Dubinsky said, "Things were relaxed and the group was conscious of the deadlines of the night but seemed ready and willing to meet them. Who could have guessed what was coming?"

Production nights are usually pretty relaxed. Editing and laying out of the paper is combined with editors reclining in their smoking jackets discussing all manner of topics. Our talks range from debates of the

best way to grill swordfish to questions of whether cubism was strictly a modern movement or if it was always there and it was just that no one was looking for it to simply catching up on how Cisco did that day and whether we need to diversify our portfolios. Cucumber sandwiches and Ceylon tea with crumpets are provided care of the SSMU and we are able to be productive without exhausting ourselves. As Mr. Dubinsky noted, no one saw it coming on Wednesday night.

We were three quarters done with just the commentary pages left to do and the resolution of an argument about whether we should replace our Sports page with the Wheels section that we are hoping to introduce.

As Ben Errett, co-ordinating editor and all round decent bloke, began laying out the commentary pages the team went into overdrive. We were running late and the courier who takes the paper to the printers was already waiting in the office. We were under the gun. We had to dig through our mail pile to find the best and the brightest criticism and compliments of our paper to be included on the page. We also had to lay out the editorial that had been put through our libel committee, lease committee and feel-good gurus. Meanwhile, Buckminster E. Slibel (he has an unlisted number so don't even think about it) had submitted his column of written truth earlier in the day and an editorial intern, who is keen to impress but has been allowed a bit too much freedom as you shall soon learn, had laid Slibel's work out on the first commentary page. Most of the regular staff had assumed that the work had been fact-checked because that is one of the most

important parts of the process. Unfortunately this intern, who shall remain nameless because he now works at another campus paper, failed to do the necessary work to ensure that all the information was accurate.

Errett finished the commentary pages and the paper was handed over to the courier. The editors sighed in relief and gathered up their top hats and walking sticks to get ready to head home to the manor. Errett is meticulously meticulous and was just re-checking the pages so that he could sleep soundly that night knowing that there were no ad lines that weren't square or that the kerning was all in order. As his eyes glanced over the page, he spotted it.

At first it seemed hard to believe it was there.

He checked the version of the document he had open to ensure that it wasn't an earlier copy of the page. It wasn't. This was the copy that was now on its way to the printer in the hands of the courier. Errett moved fast because he knew that every second he wasted the odds of undoing the error got exponentially worse. Photo editor Brie O'Keefe called 911 to see if it would be possible to set up a roadblock to stop the courier. Meanwhile, the other editors flagged the first cab they saw on McTavish and told the friendly driver "Follow that car or it's curtains for McGill's free press...uh, oh wait, that already happened. Well...uh... just follow that car and there's a couple of extra quid in it for you." The driver, a colonial, obliged and didn't hold back. Dubinsky set out on foot.

Well, alas. We'd like to tell you that the story didn't end there. We'd love to say that the chase was long and heart-racing and that we caught the courier. We want to tell

you that Mr. Dubinsky is still with us but the last we heard he was in Cornwall and starting to like it. But Montreal's streets are dirty and Montreal's streets are mean. Even with a OneStar serviced cab, there are a thousand ways to lose an errant courier. We drove the streets for another half hour looking desperately for the courier but to no avail. We had humiliated the paper, the university and Mother England.

We know you already know. It probably stuck out like a blacksmith in a gentlemen's club. We haven't slept for three days and some of us are having trouble thinking about ever going back to class.

We grew up with him just like you did. You finished watching *Who's the Boss?* and then it was time for him. The Seavers seduced our hearts by appealing to our minds. We knew them and loved them. Maybe we just didn't know them well enough. The man of the house was Dr. Seaver. If you were his friend or wife, you could call him Jason. In our last issue, we called him David. You can't imagine the humiliation and desperation of our hardy crew of talented idealists. In The Daily office, pride is rarer than a Mouton-Rothschild at an Easter brunch. We apologize. We apologize to the Seavers. We apologize to the actors who portrayed them. We apologize to the fans. But most of all we apologize to you the readers. You trusted us and we let you down. Not only will we not let this lessen our vigour in giving you the best product on campus, three times a week but we will never make this mistake again. Rest easy, gentle readers. We will not lower our guard and will continue to prove to you our commitment to quality and accuracy and our unerring devotion to the Truth.

Count the Alan Thicke heads in this issue, come to our office today with a fruit between 3 and 6 pm and we'll give you a not-so-valuable prize!



I was playing the drinking game "I never" with some other students in London over the summer, when one of my friends came up with a confession that blew us all away. "Never have I ever," she said confidently, knowing that everyone in the room would soon be drinking. "...had an orgasm."

"What?" I asked, sure that I'd heard her wrong.

"You poor child," another murmured.

"But...but..." asked someone else confusedly, "how many guys have you had sex with?"

"Four."

"Not even by yourself?" questioned another member of the group.

There was no response. My pitied friend only glared at the girl as if she had three heads. The game went on.

Fast forward: It's August. I return from Europe to find that my loser-ex-boyfriend has gotten himself a new girlfriend. Great, she'll probably treat him better anyway - but here's my dilemma: Who, now, am I to

have casual sex with?? I presented this issue to many people, until one of my guy friends just blurted out, "Why don't you just get off by yourself?"

"What?"

"Who?"

"Me?"

Whatever!

As you may now have guessed, I've since seen the errors of my ways. And have also noticed that there is something very wrong here. Is it possible that many women, such as my friend mentioned above, have reached their sexual peaks without knowing enough about their own bodies to reach sexual climaxes during intercourse? And others still, such as my stupid self of one month ago, view the practice of female masturbation as socially taboo? In a culture where sex has come to equal power, jerking off implies autonomy, and masturbation is thus equivalent to individual empowerment. I sincerely hope not.

Yet the stats prove upsetting. According to the Kinsey Report only 40% of females admitted to masturbate while 90% of males engage in the act. Power to the 40, but something needs to be done now to help the majority.

And as if these numbers aren't a sad enough reflection upon the gender roles in

today's society, they are accompanied in cultural studies texts with theoretical conclusions such as: "The lower incidence of female masturbation found today is unlikely to result from social suppression of female sexuality but instead reflects women's more intermittent interest in seeking orgasm". The authors of this particular text support their indictment by claiming that male masturbation is "strongly stigmatized" by society whereas that of women has been encouraged since The Second Wave. They then conclude, citing evidence that such an onslaught (I weep for them) has not effected the statistics of male masturbation, cultural factors have no bearing on the incidences.

Having grown up in a society where feminine desire is so highly valued that the vast majority of the sex industry is geared toward a male audience, and such nice names are given to women who choose to feed this desire, I might believe that statement for about a second. If even. And Stigmatized? By whom? The Catholic Church maybe? Right...and all of us card carrying Catholics (myself included, of course) take that 'no-sex-before-marriage-thing' real seriously too.

Anyway, back to reality. Within male social circles I have often seen that jerking

off is a fun and acceptable topic of conversation, even with females around. As far as female socialization is concerned, I cannot speak for everyone, but judging from the circles I've run in, this has not been the case. What I'm trying to say is that it is not enough for us just to masturbate, we have to talk about it too, so as to let others, who may be unsure, know that it is all good.

Our denial to pleasure ourselves is as much a product of cultural conditioning as the myth that men want sex more than women do; both notions denying feminine desire its fair share of the erotic cake.

In such a light, female masturbation can be seen as a very political action.

For example, we say that we want control over our bodies. That's all it comes down to, usually. But let me ask you this...how much control do we really have if we can't even manage to reach an orgasm by ourselves?

Further, the backlash succeeded to divide woman's bodies and woman's minds into two warring camps. By learning to pleasure our own bodies, we can facilitate the reconciliation necessary for our mobilization against the remnants of patriarchy. And it's fun too.

Fembot appears on Mondays

Hey kids! McLouse here to present an extra-special full page of comics and art by The Daily's all-star team of cartoonists!

COMICS

extravaganza!

Boys, I know we're all dildos, but listen...

Sex Shop Overstock Motivational Talk

by Claire Blanchet

I was on vacation, so I visited the jungle.

Suddenly, a 20 foot Python jumped on me.

And just before he squeezed me to death, I thought I heard him say...

Hey man... Welcome back to the food chain

by John Paul Koning

I love you.

Yeah, I like you alot too.

by John Paul Koning

COOKING IN RESIDENCE

STEP ONE: GET PAN

COOKING IS EASY! BE JUST LIKE MOM + DAD!!

STEP TWO: CHOP VEGETABLES

SLICE, DICE! --WAIT, WHAT WAS IT MOM + DAD DID NEXT?

STEP THREE: UHH...

ERRR... SAUCE? ...THEY'D MAKE... WITH CURRY AND... DID I FORGET A STEP?

STEP FOUR: KRAFT DINNER.

TASTES ORANGE.

MMMM...

by Channing Rodman

"I've come to conclude that the problem, Mr. Ricard, is you truly believe that you're broccoli."

by Claire Blanchet

Introducing **eBACON**

Finally, your favourite breakfast Meat is on the Internet!

by Steve Barker

letters



EGGERS ON OUR FACE?

I'd like to take the opportunity to disagree with Ben Errett in his criticism of Dave Eggers for attempting to "keep it real." What I see as more relevant than Eggers' desperate justification for being

well-paid is his implicit condemnation of himself and his ilk for secretly caring so about such silliness as how much he was paid to write the book—whether or not he is "keeping it real" may be subordinate to the fact that he and others care whether he is "keeping it real" in the first place. Perhaps he is both celebrating and decrying his people for their covert self-consciousness; this seems to be a trend, if what I read in the equally self-critical and entertaining *Trucker Magazine* is to be believed.

I, for one, hope that it is: hooray for wallowing in my guilty conscience! Huzzah for shedding the oppressive shack-

les of the middle-class guilt complex! Long live the contradictions!

Ian McKellar
UI History

We love getting your mail! Send it on over to letters@mcgilldaily.com! Yeah!

LETTERS AND HYDE PARKS ARE WELCOMED ON THE DAILY'S COMMENTARY PAGES. LETTERS MUST BE UNDER 300 WORDS, WHILE HYDE PARKS SHOULD BE UNDER 500 WORDS. PLEASE DROP THEM OFF IN SHATNER B-03 OR EMAIL THEM TO LETTERS@MCGILLDAILY.COM

WRITE FOR

THE MCGILL DAILY

NEWS MEETINGS:
MONDAY 4:00 TO 6:00PM

PHOTOGRAPHY MEETINGS:
MONDAY 5:00PM

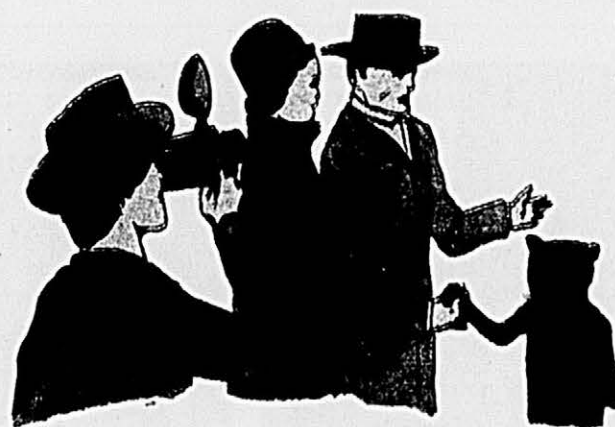
CULTURE MEETINGS:
FRIDAY 4:00 PM

EVERYONE WELCOME!

ALL MEETINGS IN SHATNER B-03



The silly and sinister world of Marcel Dzama



Three years ago, the Winnipeg artist was a university student drawing for his campus paper. Now he's got shows in New York and Germany and knows Matt Groening. Here's how it happened.

BY BEN ERRETT
The McGill Daily

At first glance, Marcel Dzama's pen and watercolour drawings appear to be cute and whimsical. Bears and rabbits frolic together, and a man with a tree stump for a head chats with a bemused observer. But wait a second—that bear has a funny look on his face, and he's force-feeding those rabbits honey. And that alligator is eating severed heads. And why is the Tin Man lassoing cattle with a winged monkey? It soon becomes clear that something's not quite right with these pictures. And that something is making Dzama a sensation in the art world.

Dzama's professional art career began three years ago, while he was a student at the University of Manitoba. There he met

the other artists with whom he would found the Royal Art Lodge.

"There was a group of students at the University of Manitoba, and we all liked each other's artwork," Dzama explains. "We were in classes with other students whose art was kind of similar to ours. We liked their work and they liked our work as well, so we decided to get together."

Dzama and his uncle, Neil Farber, who is one year younger than the 26-year-old Dzama, had been looking to collaborate with other artists, and the group that they met, including Michael Dumontier, Drue Langois, Myles Langois, John Phlypckuck and Dzama's sister Hollie, soon started meeting as the Royal Art Lodge.

The Lodge, which Dzama says was given a pretentious name as a joke by the group, started meeting in the evenings and

churning out drawings.

"We used to get together every Sunday and just do drawings and collaborate," says the soft-spoken Dzama.

"We start a drawing and pass it around. We've filled up two suitcases. We try to do at least a hundred drawings every night."

MEDIA ATTENTION

It was through the Lodge that Dzama first garnered attention from the art world. "Sometimes people would come and watch. We've been interviewed while we're drawing, which is kind of funny because we're just sitting there drawing and talking."

"I was just doing this stuff at the university, and Wayne Baerwaldt, the curator at the Plug In Gallery came in and saw my work. The Plug In has a biannual event,

and he decided to include me along with a group of artists. The show sold out [of my work] in three days."

Dzama pauses, and quickly adds, "They're really affordable drawings."

This caught the attention of Winnipeg art critic Robert Enright, who championed Dzama, most recently in a profile last year in *Saturday Night*. After the article appeared, Dzama got a call from Leanne Shapton, then the Avenue Page Editor for *The National Post*.

"They do a 'First of the Month' [special Avenue] page, and I did one for December of last year. Leanne liked my work, so when *Saturday Night* was going into *The National Post*, they called me to do illustrations for 'The Passing Show.'"

Dzama's work now appears weekly in the magazine. He notes that the published-



drawings are more minimalist than his usual work, and a walk through the exhibit of his work currently on at the Saidye Bronfman Centre reveals a twisted world that's only touched upon in his magazine drawings.

MODEST ABOUT SUCCESS

Despite glowing reviews from *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times* and a host of other media, Dzama still seems like an average guy from Winnipeg who enjoys his drawing and is happy to be able to continue.

"It's been about three years now since it all began," Dzama says of his rise to prominence.

"The first two years were pretty crazy. Now I'm just trying to focus on my work."

He's currently working on drawings for an upcoming show in Cologne, in addition to one that will soon be opening in New York. But he's still active in other media, including a film he is collaborating on with Deco Dawson, another Winnipeg artist.

"My dad plays me as this artist whose drawings come to life," he explains.

"It's animation and live action. Some of the Art Lodge members made costumes."

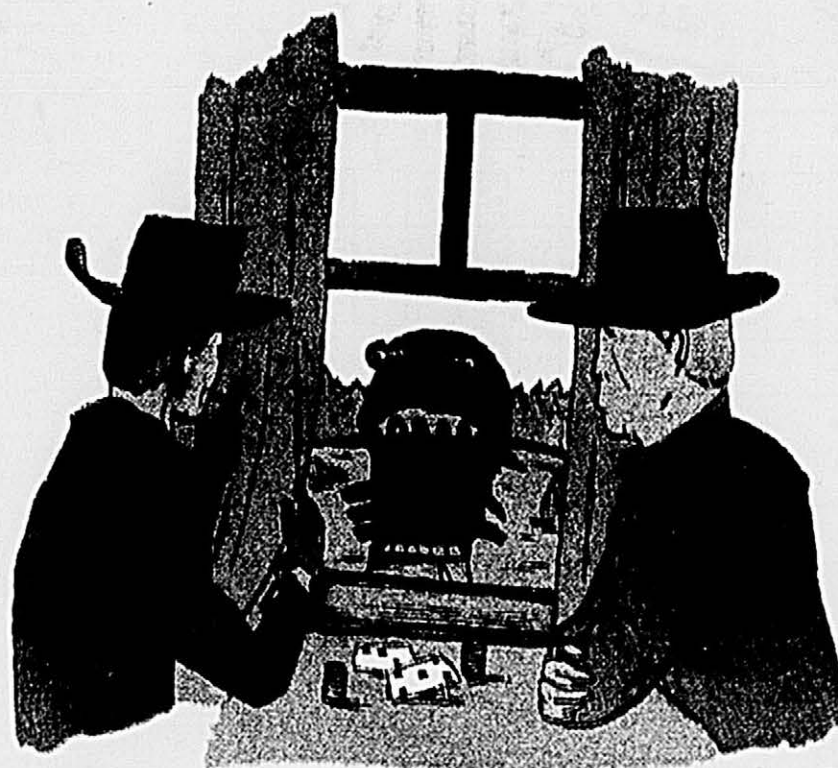
He maintains his modesty, noting that the film would probably be shown at film festivals and wasn't likely to become a blockbuster. He speaks with similar humbleness about his conversations with Matt Groening, the creator of *Life is Hell* and *The Simpsons* and arguably the world's most successful cartoonist.

"At one time, we were supposed to collaborate on some kind of cartoon," Dzama explains, "but it never really came together."

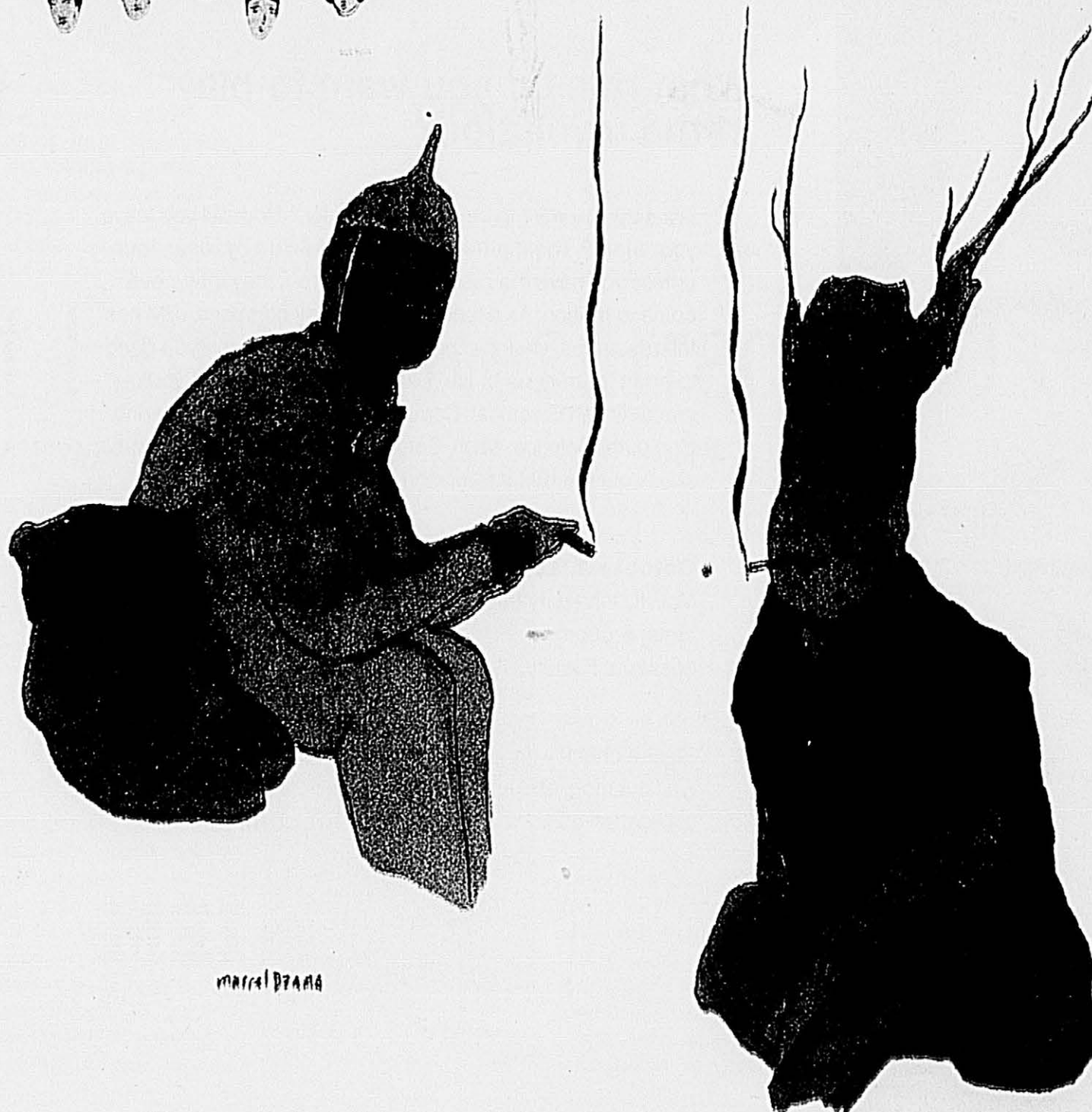
"That was before *Futurama*, so I guess that came along and he decided to devote his attention to that."

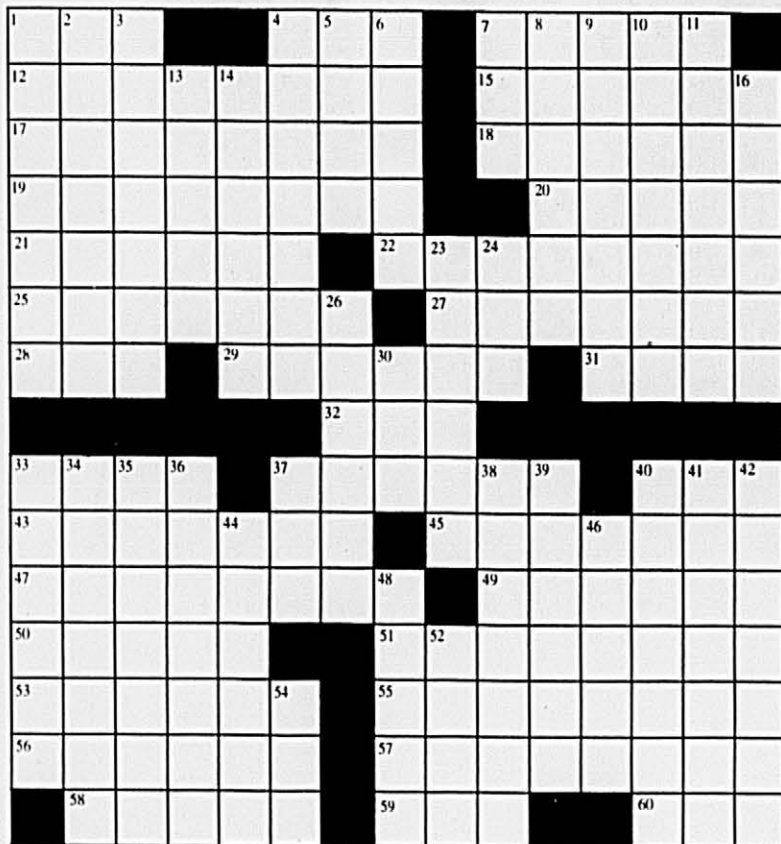
At the Bronfman Centre, Dzama was overwhelmed slightly by the mass of adoring fans that has come to see his work. He signs each book of his work with one of his drawings, a process which takes him about twenty minutes for each signing. As he puts his head down to start in on a bear, he seems to tune out the chatter of the gallery and become immersed in the strange and wonderful world of his art.

Marcel Dzama: More Famous Drawings is on at The Liane and Danny Taran Gallery of the Saidye Bronfman Centre for the Arts until October 29.



All artwork on these pages and the cover by Marcel Dzama. Reprinted from *Marcel Dzama: More Famous Drawings*, edited by Wayne Baerwaldt, Plug In Editions, 1999.





QUESTIONABLE

By DEREK BOWMAN
The Manitoban, Winnipeg

ACROSS

1. _____ Agathe, MB
2. _____ du Bonnet, MB
7. Latin line dance?
12. _____ safe distance, follow behind
15. Swahbuckling needs
17. please, in Spanish
18. say meaningful stuff
19. make a funeral speech
20. "You look like you've just _____ ghost!"
21. some steaks
22. Gilligan's vessel
25. Spanglocized name for a "Simpson's" brat
27. have, as ingredients
28. date
29. mild, medium and hot
31. gonorrhea, chlamydia and crabs
32. Sunday service speech
33. Grand poem

37. prepare leftovers
40. _____ amis, my friends
43. absolutely sure
45. Act in a debonnair manner
47. has a thing for B-Rok and the Boys
49. mantra wood
50. pertaining to bees
51. _____ Caulfield, The Catcher in the Rye protagonist, formally
53. family with the flu
55. being responsible at the bar, perhaps
56. give for awhile again
57. must forgo a poker hand
58. makes me dry
59. opposite of NNW
60. Deutsche: Abbr.

2. "I Love _____," Julia Roberts movie
3. oft-nibbled place in romance novels
4. "Hasta _____, baby"
5. the gamut
6. feels a deep commitment towards
7. Canadian Savings Bond: Abbr.
8. must pay the kitty
9. selling feature for a used car
10. _____ the gills, very sick
11. _____ problems, common childhood ailments
13. "_____ clear day..."
14. light, frothy beers
16. reproduces, as a salmon does
23. Egyptian beetle
24. reasons for doing, to a detective
26. TV's Mary Kate and Ashley

30. stitch up
33. Robin's Donuts creamy, chocolate offering
34. "The _____ Court" with Judge Wapner
35. popcorn giant, _____ Redenbacher
36. one who robs
37. Tony Roma's offering
38. came out again, as the sun through the clouds
39. elephant keeper
40. getting better, stitching up
41. accord between countries
42. honeybee's defense
44. "..._____ other than..."
46. Gay and Lesbian Lawyer's Association: Abbr.
48. campus bigwigs, for short
52. dosage amts.
54. "Green" banks

DOWN

1. Florida resort popular with university students

SOLUTIONS TO WEDNESDAY'S PUZZLE

Across

1. B(L)OAT
4. HOP+EFUL (fuel anag.)
8. RUE
9. EZRA POUND
10. QUARTER (2 defs.)

11. DI(V)AS (said reversed)
13. E(V)ICTS (cites anag.)
15. E-MINSK
18. ANNE-X
19. WALPOL+E (wallop anag.)
21. MASOCHIST (moist cash anag.)
23. VAN (2 defs.)
24. DELIBES

25. XEROX (2 defs.)

Down

1. BAROQUE (homonym)
2. OPEn+RATION
3. TREAT (anag.)
4. HA+RARE
5. POP+EDOM (mode rev.)
6. FLUB

7. I(O)DES (sled anag.)
12. VAN(Corn+Oil+Under+Verandah)ER (raven anag.)
14. TA(XI+CA)B
16. KLEENEX (clean-ex hom.)
17. SWAINS (anag.)
18. ARMED (anag.)
20. LATE+X
22. SOLE



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Sleater-Kinney Rocks Cabaret

Out of the mainstream: music's best-kept secret offers foot-stomping performance

BY JASON MAGHANOV
The McGill Daily

Sleater-Kinney isn't going to be a secret much longer. It's the kind of band that's just so talented and kick-ass live that fans don't want anyone else to share the crazed emotions that they feel when attending their live shows.

Sleater-Kinney's music is too special, manic and important for just anyone to hear. The hundreds packed into the Cabaret on Wednesday night were treated to a marvelous concert: a rousing and foot-stomping live show that was among the best I've ever attended. I have never had as much fun at a live show as I did at the Cabaret on Wednesday.

The performance space of the Cabaret is small and intimate, and the venue's acoustics allowed for clarity in the music. The openers, OCO, were good though somewhat monotonous. Its lead singer has a very pretty voice, but the two member band which includes only drums and bass, didn't have enough musical dynamics. The sound was flat and was missing the additional harmony a guitar would have brought. The second openers, White Stripe, were okay, though it seemed the lead singer was trying to do his best rendition of AC/DC.

Finally, Sleater-Kinney took the

stage, and the place erupted. The band's interaction with the audience was great: they talked, we listened, we talked back, they laughed. It was the first time Sleater-Kinney had played Montreal and Montreal fans were

The pretty, and at times scathing, tones from Corin and Carrie's guitar's sounded great, and Janet played behind the drums as

the Doctor"; it got the crowd going crazy, and from that point on, the show took off. When the band played "I Wanna Be Your Joey Ramone," I was giddy with pleasure and when they

they still don't rock; they just make a more beautiful version of it. It's punk, grown-up. Sleater-Kinney took the roof off the Cabaret, and left the audience stomping their feet, whistling, and banging ashtrays on tables.

Thanks to some outstanding LPs (*Call the Doctor*, *Dig Me Out*, *The Hot Rock*, *All Hands on the Bad One*),

Sleater-Kinney have cemented a place for themselves in rock's critical canon. As they say in their song "I Wanna Be Your Joey Ramone," they are indeed the "queens of rock and roll." They play punk-rock that is visceral and sweet. Sleater-Kinney is like the band that plays in their garage next to your house, but doesn't bother you. They do not hold on to any notion of pretension. They don't glam themselves up for photo ops, they don't write songs for the radio, and just because they're girls doesn't mean they're soft.

After the band finished their first set the crowd urged them for an encore which they delivered. Playing such classic cuts as "Dig Me Out" and ending with a hands in the air, heavy rendition of "Little Mouth" Sleater-Kinney sent me home happy, exhausted, and with ringing ears.



Sleater-Kinney meets Montreal.

appreciative. Sleater-Kinney's music is a wondrous entity: a dirty mixture of thrashing drums, heavy guitars, punk-rock sensibility, and wonderfully melodic and operatic voices. Guitarists Corin and Carrie have perfectly complimentary voices. One is high and operatic, the other low and harmonious.

if she were trying to slam holes into them. After playing the title track to their newest album "All Hands on the Bad One" they played the classic "Call

played "Getup," ceding to the request of one nosy fan, I was on my feet.

Sleater-Kinney has gone through a wondrous evolution from scathing punk rock to a more intricate and melodic approach. That's not to say

Almost Famous Resurrects 70s

Cameron Crowe's young life compels on silver screen

BY ZANDER ROSS
The McGill Daily

This week, Hollywood allows us to take a refreshing break from the mainstream \$100 million, action packed, special effects-laden, eyes-popping-out-of-their-sockets movies that have filled cineplexes of late, and enchants us with an epic tale of every adolescent's dream: to live the life of a rock star. *Almost Famous* offers the viewer a captivating paradox of the innocence of youth pitted against the sometimes tainted and often sordid rock star lifestyle of sex, drugs and rock 'n roll.

In the early 1970's, William (Patrick Fugit) finds himself forced to grow up quickly as he departs from the strict and protective confines of his mother and is thrust into the exciting

world of the music industry in order to fulfill his dreams as a music journalist. Fugit's character represents one of three sides to this story: innocence and passion, a rare commodity in an industry riddled with drugs and promiscuity. In his writing, William's love for music from a non-commercial standpoint shines through. The second side to this story is shown from the perspective of William's mother, who represents the parents of the 70s generation trying desperately to understand the freedom revolution and missing the point. The third side to the story is the rock band. The touring, the fans, the sex and the acid, the larger-than-life sensation—everything your parents warned you so adamantly about. The fictitious group Stillwater represents the struggle of bands during the 1970s, as they fight to play strictly for the music while also



Not famous, but almost.
wanting to make it to the cover of *Rolling Stone*. The band calls William

the enemy in the spirit of their remaining malevolence towards the commercialization of music. However, the band takes him under their wing in order to get a good review and maybe even the cover story from the most well-known music magazine in the world.

Words have no age, so William uses them to his advantage; persuading *Rolling Stone* magazine to hire him on the strength of his writing samples, and getting them to send him on assignment to tour with Stillwater. Fugit, along with Billy Crudup, Jason Lee, Frances McDormand, and Kate Hudson, weave a tale of glory, fame, and sadness, showing what it would be like to have thousands of screaming fans ready to pounce in adoration at every breath that you take.

What makes *Almost Famous* not just a good film but a great one, is its

autobiographical nature. Cameron Crowe, writer and director of *Almost Famous* and *Jerry Maguire*, based the story of William on his own career as a young journalist. Because of all of his experiences as a music critic, Crowe introduced a level of realism and intensity into the film that might have been lost with another director. The accurate portrayal of life back stage, the great parties and the long road trips are so real because of Crowe's first-hand experience and his passion comes through clearly. *Almost Famous* is complemented by the tremendous soundtrack, consisting of hit after hit from beloved 70s icons Jimi Hendrix, Simon and Garfunkel, Peter Dinklage, Elton John, Cream, and a selection of other illustrious performers who would have been the musical contemporaries of Stillwater.

Veruca Salt and the Trials of Fame

Chicago band's cosy gig at Café Campus shows why the loyal fans are still around

BY RENATE ROBERTSON
The McGill Daily

Veruca Salt is a cure for warts, an irritating Roald Dahl character who turns into a blueberry, and a

ously true; the purple-lit stage was heavy with emotion as she breathed, "I've tried to keep her on a short leash..." When I questioned him later about why the song was so special to Post, guitarist Stephen Fitzpatrick

Ryder. So *Resolver* is, as the title would suggest, some sort of attempt at emotional resolution but most of the songs (all written by Post) still sound pretty bitter and sad. And angry. Very, very angry. *Resolver* wasn't what Post was

The Montreal show seemed to be as much a therapy session for Post as it was gratification and entertainment for her fans. When Post sang, in "Disconnected," "And you can't make me/ Love your band/ Or buy your records," somebody in the audience shouted, "Foo Fighters SUCK!"

Before playing "Seether," (which was written, incidentally, by Gordon) Post said in an aside to the crowd, "It's hard playing in front of an audience when you can see their faces... Especially when they're whispering in French." After a pause, she added cryptically, "They deserve some anonymity too."

The shooters seemed to be having an effect by the end of the show, or maybe it was the atmosphere; at moments during her songs, Post appeared to be teary-eyed; at others, driven with wrath. She was having fun though. They all were. There was an uber-exuberant Jimmy Madla on drums (he says cheerfully, "People think I

Sokol's bass at one point during the show. It was a tie. There was also Louise Post doing astonishingly lewd things with her guitar, with an incongruent scowl of concentration on her face.

The fans who bought Post the drinks - Maria Mataragas, Tracy Fiorenza, and Nick Suikounos, all post-high school teens from Chicago - are on the band's free admittance list, and have been following them on the road throughout their tour. I talked to them at the Bifteck after the show. Nick told me quietly that he doesn't listen to anything but Veruca Salt anymore, which is a fairly impressive sign of devotion, as they only have three full-length CDs. Maria, animated and chatty, says her friends call her "crazy" but she doesn't care.

The three all seem to see Post as something of a saint, and took pains to impress on me the degree of her friendliness and equanimity. Maria leaned toward me, her eyes bugging out with the manic intensity and focus that is



Lucas Rieppel

mid-90's Chicago alterna-pop band who played Café Campus last Monday. But warts are gross, and we've read *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* a million times, so let's talk about the band. Their show was an emotionally draining, intense two-hour set at the cozy venue which bonded the band and the audience. Louise Post's diehard fans repeatedly offered her shooters, which she and her band drained onstage as they played material from their new album *Resolver*, along with favorites from *American Thighs* and *Eight Arms to Hold You*.

Post told the audience, "This song is sacred to me," as the band glided into a breathtaking slow version of "Seether," Veruca's first hit. It was obvi-

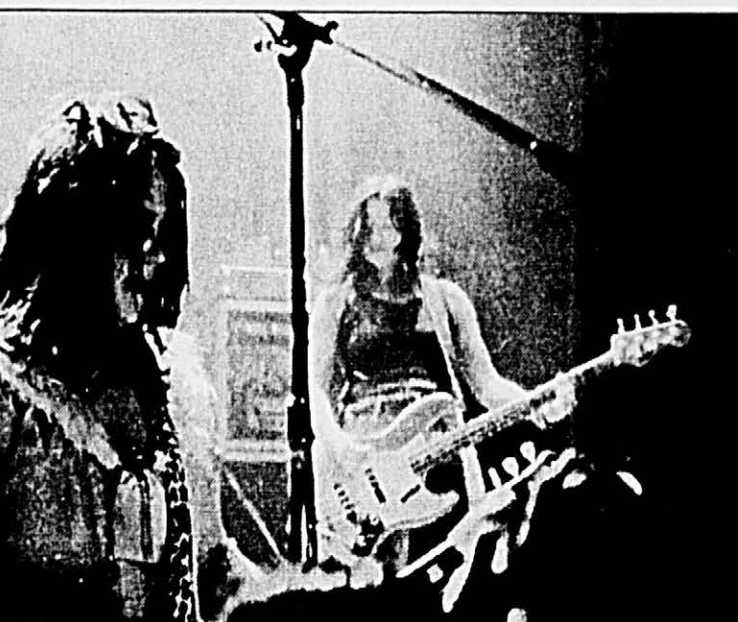
shrugged: "Veruca Salt is 'Seether'."

Is or was? The band has an almost entirely different lineup than it did when it was formed in Chicago in 1993. In fact, Post is the only remaining original member. The others - Stacy Jones, Steve Lack, and Nina Gordon - left in 1998 in a semi-mysterious epic squabble. The particularly dramatic element of the conflict is the acrimony between bassist Gordon and Post, who were once best friends. Apparently they got into one of those boyfriend-y things that ruin friendships and really suck, but most fans aren't really clear on how it happened. In any case, their friendship ended, the band broke up, and then Post's boyfriend - Dave Grohl of the Foo Fighters - left her for Winona

Top: Guitarist Stephen Fitzpatrick, left, attacks his guitar while singer Louise Post wails despondent in the background.

Right: Post, left, takes a break from singing while Suzanne Sokol leans back and lays down the rhythm.

originally going to call the album, in fact. As one Internet fan delicately puts it, "I am glad that she did not decide to call it 'The Bitch is Back.' That would not have been good."



Lucas Rieppel

play well, but the truth is I just hit them really hard,") and a guitarist, Stephen Fitzpatrick, with a good haircut and a large, penis-shaped guitar. His Gibson got in a battle with Suzanne

the peculiar mark of a true fan. "Quote me on this! Quote me on this!" she ordered me. "Louise Post has been through hell and back, and she fuckin' still rocks."

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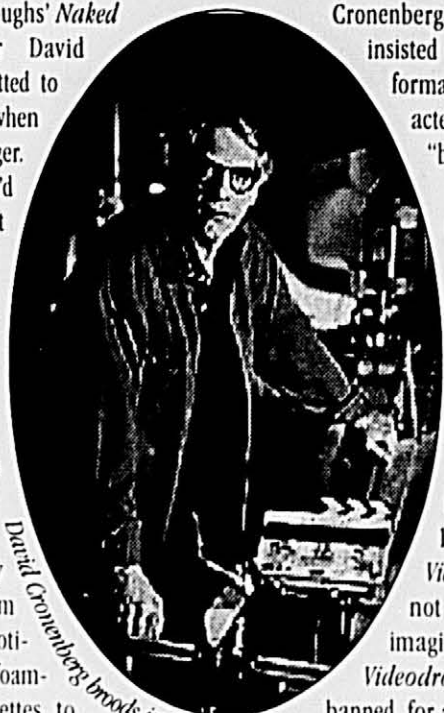
Cronenberg: One Sick Mind

New festival at Cinema du Parc shows off the twisted Canadian auteur

BY BEN SASSON
The McGill Daily

In an interview conducted upon the 1991 release of his adaptation of William Burroughs' *Naked Lunch*, director David Cronenberg admitted to taking acid once when he was a teenager. Only once? You'd never guess it from his films.

Currently being shown in a retrospective at Cinema Du Parc running until October 5, his movies are chock-full of hallucinatory images. From *Videodrome's* eroticized breast-like foam-rubber videocassettes to *Dead Ringers'* Jeremy Irons dreaming of girlfriend Genevieve Bujold gnawing on the umbilical attachment between himself and his conjoined twin, the movies never fail to



David Cronenberg broods intensely.

be provocative. The images, more often than not detailing some kind of deformity, hint at what would seem to be a career-long concern with the frailties of the flesh. Ever the contrarian, Cronenberg has always insisted that the transformations his characters undergo are "beautiful."

It's undeniable that he's a brilliant manipulator of aesthetics, though it's less obvious in his gritty earlier "B" films like 1983's *Videodrome*. It's not too hard to imagine a movie like *Videodrome* getting banned, for amongst all the films I've seen by Cronenberg, *Videodrome* is by far the most vulgar and least subtle in its depiction of his recurring themes of deformity and the debilitating effects of technology.

There's something about this film that is just amazingly unwholesome. A cigarette stubbed out on a woman's breast, graphic scenes of torture and an oozing vagina-like slit in James Woods' abdomen top the list of its over-the-top imagery.

To be sure, the plot is a good one, tracing the plight of a TV executive (James Woods) as he attempts to draw higher ratings with more violent and sexually explicit programming, only to become increasingly manipulated by the very thing he's searching for. If the plot sounds familiar, then maybe you've been reading cyberpunk novels by writers like William Gibson. The movie echoes them in many ways, especially in its dystopian setting and with the increasing control the status quo gains over the general population through the media. More likely, you've probably seen other movies by Cronenberg, in which people's lives are redefined by

technology in ways they never expect or even imagine.

For all its eye-popping visuals, *Videodrome* in many ways comes to wallow in its own sleazy vibe. The main characters are cold and unsympathetic, seemingly brainwashed before they've

effects like the aforementioned slit accepting brainwashing videotapes, in the later film we're treated to seductively organic-looking video game pods that plug into the spine. Like many of the more recent works that have earned Cronenberg such acclaim, *Existenz* uses impeccable editing and a mid-tempo pace to make the viewing experience eminently accessible, massaging the eye more often than assaulting it. In this film as in many of his other films Cronenberg's hometown of Toronto is used to great effect, appearing ultra-sleek and futuristic. This use of highly polished surfaces at times says

“Videodrome is by far the most vulgar and least subtle in its depiction of his recurring themes of deformity and the debilitating effects of technology.”

more about his deluded, but outwardly normal-seeming characters than the grisly makeup. Still, it's the makeup that makes Cronenberg the sicko we know and love. So, take yourself down to Cinema Du Parc and take in some beautiful weirdness.

David Cronenberg's films will be playing for the remainder of the month at Cinema Du Parc.

Instead of cheesy, ill-conceived

Moist: Was, Is and Shall Be

How the small guys of rock made it up to medium and how they'll make it big

BY JOSH MARSHALL
CUP, The Ontario, Guelph

In the early 90s, bands like Nirvana and Pearl Jam redefined what was mainstream and alternative in music. Five friends, most of whom had attended Queen's University but who lived in Vancouver, began developing their own style of rock. Unknown at the time, those friends became Moist, one of Canada's top rock acts, Moist.

Since their formation in 1992, you would think their friendship has deteriorated much like relationships in successful rock bands often do. But they insist their friendship is stronger than ever.

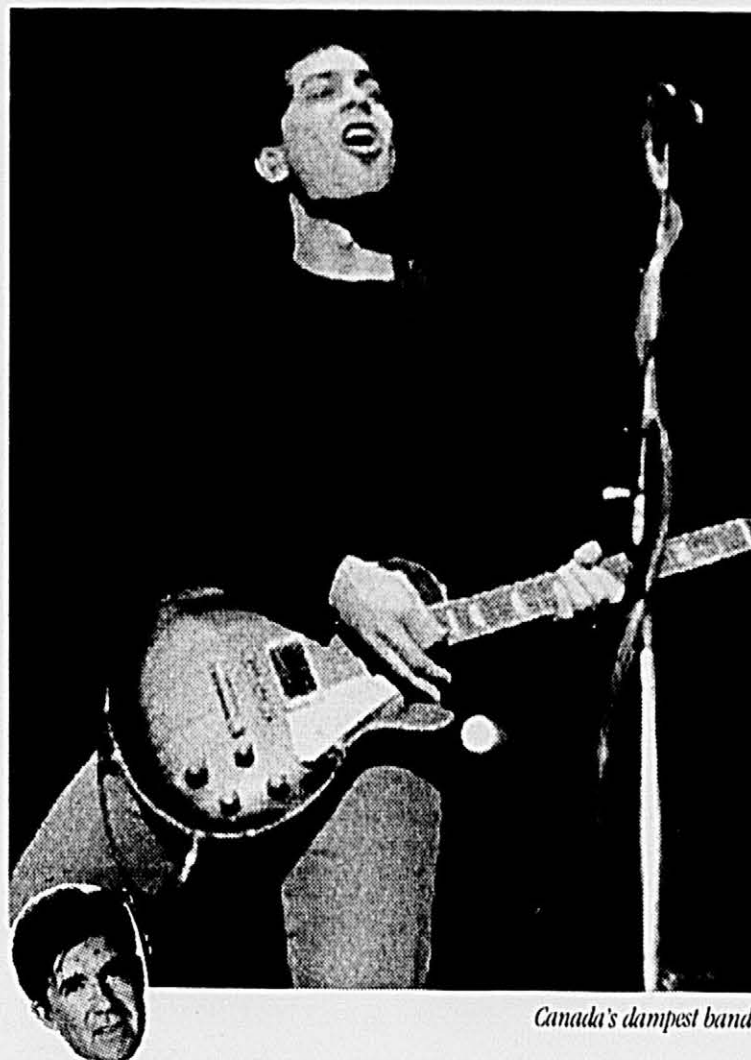
"We are friends first and foremost," explains bassist Jeff Pearce. "I don't get the impression that this happens with a lot of bands, but our band - we could be off the road for a day, two days, and suddenly it's like 'Hey, let's go for drinks.'"

Along with Pearce, Moist includes vocalist David Usher, guitarist Mark Makowy, drummer Paul Wilcox, and keyboard player Kevin Young, do not consider themselves rock stars, but regular guys who, when not touring, do usual things. "I'm always the one debunking the rock 'n' roll myth," says Pearce with a smile.

This includes giving credit to well-crafted pop songs, such as those you might hear from today's teen stars or

Michael Jackson, but which ultimately began in the '50s and '60s. Early on, the band did a cover of Jackson's "Billy Jean" recognizing that a good song is a good

song regardless. For Pearce, "There's a real sort of craft that comes with writing one of these things that seems like a disposable pop song."



Canada's dampest band.

Moist gained popularity in 1994 with the single "Push", from their album *Silver*. The album was recorded as a demo, with little time spent polishing the songs. The band started playing live and wanted to capture the energy of their shows. *Silver* gave them attention and a growing audience, and their follow-up album in 1996, *Creature*, catapulted the band into the spotlight. Songs like "Leave it Alone" and "Gasoline" received heavy airplay, and Moist appeared in festivals and headlined tours throughout Canada. Despite its popularity, the band saw *Creature* as an awkward adjustment to the studio.

"The studio is a weird place," reflects Pearce. "I mean, when you're used to playing on a stage in front of a lot of people, to go into a very sterile environment is a different sort of thing." Canadian fans responded wildly to the album. US audiences proved a bit harder to win over.

The band spent time in the mid-'90s trying to build a US fan base, but has decided to stay focused on playing for the Canadian audiences they have already charmed. "It would be nice to have some in-roads in America," says Pearce, "But we sort of need to feel like there's something really worth going down there for, and just going down there to knock our heads against the

wall - we've been doing that a long time."

After *Creature*, Usher went solo releasing *Little Songs*, surprising the band and fans alike with its quiet, intimate mood. Usher's album marked a bit of a turning point for the whole band, who had long been expanding its influences beyond their alternative/post-punk roots. On tour, Moist began listening to British trip-hop groups such as Massive Attack, and British rock groups such as Blur and Oasis, because, according to Pearce, "playing rock 'n' roll music for a living means that very few of us actually go home and listen to a lot of rock music."

It was not until after Usher's solo project that the band felt they could stretch themselves to incorporate new elements into their music. *Mercedes Five and Dime* was the culmination of studio experimentation, marking the first time the band felt comfortable enough to have fun and try new things.

"We all realized that we have the freedom now to stretch the band in directions that we hadn't thought of before," Pearce explains. "We have enough songs in our repertoire to make people jump up and down, so we actually now have the freedom to write songs that do other things...things that don't make us money."

the BOOKSHELF

An Ecospiritualist Polemic

Former McGill prof takes a searing look at the wretched of the earth

The Prophet of the Plains
by Robert H. Tessier
Shoreline,
77 pages

The *Prophet of the Plains* is former McGill music professor Robert Tessier's second foray into the literary spectrum. His first effort was a "environmental" novel, and while I'm not quite sure what that means, *Plains* seems to follow in this vein. It is a book-length poem chronicling Grey Elk's attempts to come to terms with the destruction of the earth by Western Civilization. Elk is an embodiment of the Native North American spirit who is reborn at the time of the first European set-

tlers. Elk's survey of the land simultaneously encompasses several ambiguous stages in history as well more specific social positions.

The poem pits Elk against a variety of caricatures from society. There is Hairy Man who plays the part of an early colonist, Black Coat representing Catholicism, and even The President. Elk engages in a dialogue with each representative about the nature of mankind and his relation to the earth. Linking these conversations are Elk's views on various institutions, such as the city.

A self-proclaimed "ecospiritualist", Tessier relies upon a certain mysticism to form the crux of Elk's arguments. In this

regard the scope of the work reminds one of Kahil Gibran or William Blake, though Tessier is much less convincing in his words. The over-reaching argument which Tessier makes is against reason and the machine-like character of our society. Elk cringes at what he calls our "fatal dependence" on technology. The advancement of our civilization has created a disjunction between the inherent unity of man and earth. It is a disjunction which our continued reliance on capitalist forces only aggravates.

The poem is a polemic more than anything else. Tessier, using language that is often extremely blunt, fills his pages with

an urgency about our fast-decaying environment. This, however, bogs down the work with a certain narrow-mindedness.

The dialogue between characters sets the reader up to expect the rhetoric of either side to be well represented. Here Tessier fails, for example, when the priest responds to Elk's remarks: "Red Man, guard your tongue! God knows you are but a savage/and has sent me to save your immortal soul". The characterizations of Elk's perceived enemies are too shallow and undermine them to a point which is almost humorous. Furthermore Grey Elk's responses are over the top, "These wretched of the earth/were hopelessly caught by the

tentacles/of religious tyranny and violence." This is about as subtle as this book gets.

Because the work is not very complex the point is made almost immediately, easily by the first two chapters. Unfortunately, much of the book is spent repeating concepts Elk outlines earlier in the work; they are simply set against different backdrops. Reading *The Prophet of the Plains*, one cannot deny Tessier's genuine concern behind his project. The themes addressed make the work relevant but his message too often gets tangled up with his literary medium.
— Jonathan Montpetit

THE PROPHET OF THE PLAINS

Robert H. Tessier



Not-so-plain-spoken poetic oeuvre

Christ Explained

The Greatest Story Ever Retold

Tell You All
by E. David Brown
Plateau Press
192 pages

In his novel *Tell You All*, E. David Brown has set it down simply for us: Jesus Christ was an ordinary guy with a vision. In an interesting and palatable version of the life of Christ, the unanswerable questions are answered. This is not another mere interpretation of Scripture but rather a story put in "real life" terms for us to grasp. The biblical characters are attributed human traits and biblical symbols are explained, if sometimes inappropriately.

The novel begins with the resurrection of Lazarus by Christ. It stays true to the biblical account of this event with a few major exceptions. Instead of being grateful about being brought back to life, Lazarus is caught in a state hovering somewhere between life and death. He is not quite alive because he is unable to see things the same way as the first time around. He is immediately abandoned by Christ before he is able

to ask for an explanation as to why he was "brought back." The book is an account of Lazarus' quest for Christ, from whom he hopes to extract meaning. During this



journey, Lazarus encounters many deaths and he comes to "the startling realization that the pursuit of Jeshua [Jesus] was irrevocably driving his people toward oblivion. All the miracles Jeshua had wrought were

actually a sentence of death." Though the obstacles encountered do get tedious at times and the biblical imagery gets a little redundant, the interpretations of biblical passages succeeds in fully capturing the reader's attention.

The account of Lazarus' life after life is not, however, the most startling part of the book. In the end, the version of Christ's resurrection presented to the reader is the unexpected twist. The story told by E. David Brown seems sensational but there is a very clear message behind it: that religion is the elixir of the people. Belief permits humanity to fulfill the need for answers. Paul the Apostle transforms the actual story of Jeshua to what has been handed down to us through centuries of Christian belief. "The myth would be transformed as needed to correspond to the pagans' beliefs until eventually it would be impossible to see where Hashem began and Zeus ended". The Epilogue cleverly links this interpretation of ancient text to the world of the twentieth century.
— Julie Girard



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Retiring Rodents

Now with major label, Modest Mouse not cheesy

BY PAUL BERRY
The McGill Daily

Montreal's often-dormant concert scene was graced this past week by a visit from Modest Mouse. Many rock critics have been fawning over the band since the release earlier this year of their much-heralded major label debut, *The Moon and Antarctica*.

Modest Mouse has built up a strong, loyal following during their time on Seattle's Up Records, many longtime fans greeted news of Modest Mouse's signing to Epic, part of the vast Sony conglomerate, with cries of a sellout. Although popular culture has never been able to formulate a satisfactory definition of that aforementioned dirty word, some die-hard music fans still deem ascension to the major label ranks to be synonymous with a complete commercialization of the music.

Singer/guitarist Isaac Brock and band mates Jeremiah Green and Eric Judy have made clear in interviews that Epic afforded them complete creative control and allowed them the budget to experiment with sounds that the shoe-string world of independent rock would have never provided them. One listen to *The Moon and Antarctica* justifies the move. The album is overflowing with a layered richness unseen on the band's earlier albums and holds together better than the band's previous works. Listeners get a picture of a band with something to say, alternating themes of isolation and sorrow with ruminations on our place in this vast and overwhelming universe. Commercial it is not. The band's new songs, be it on the stage or on the new album, make it clear that this is a band that is quite uninterested in compromising their music for the fickle tastes of the mainstream. Modest Mouse will never be eminently marketable.

That was made crystal clear once again via Tuesday's performance. The band performed about half of *The Moon and Antarctica* and dazzled the Cabaret crowd with an intense display of the power of their latest compositions. The band also played a healthy dose of older material, offering evidence of the considerable portfolio these gents have created at a very early point in their careers. Choice cuts from their previous work, 1997's *The Lonesome Crowded West*, often spiraled off into wild yet never meandering instrumental extensions.

Brock, he of the distinctive vocal rasp and often cryptic lyrics, bashed out fierce renditions of the band's more aggressive material. Possessed with a unique and powerful charisma, he also holds lead

guitar duties in the band. He lashed out searing riff after riff, substituting much of the new album's subtler production touches for a rougher and often louder sound augmented by his more than capable band mates. Green and Judy, the band's rhythm section, provided the exclamation points for Brock, supporting the songs with tight and raucous tempos.

All in all, the band left the packed

Cabaret crowd satiated in their thirst for both the band's old and new directions. Though fans are understandably attached to the Mouse they came to know and love in the past, one can't help but be excited by the new directions and tangents this talented band will set out upon. On this night, they presented themselves as a definite force to be reckoned with.



Band members do some modest drumming.

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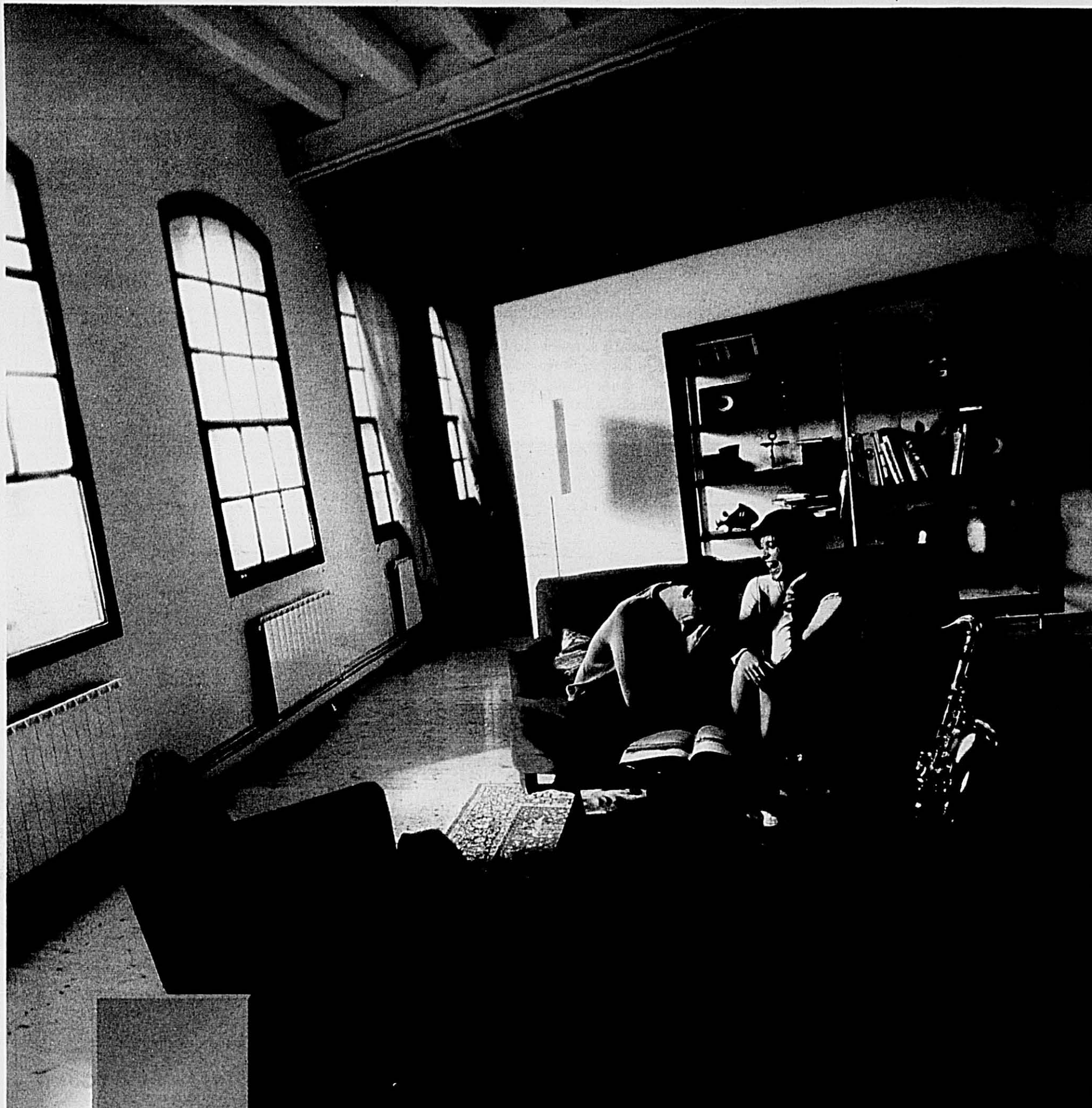
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